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PACKERS RB SAMKON GADO, VIKINGS S DARREN SHARPER & BEARS CB NATHAN VASHER NAMED NFC PLAYERS OF WEEK 10

Running back **SAMKON GADO** of the Green Bay Packers, safety **DARREN SHARPER** of the Minnesota Vikings and cornerback **NATHAN VASHER** of the Chicago Bears are the NFC Offensive, Defensive and Special Teams Players of the Week for games played the 10th week of the 2005 season (November 13-14), the NFL announced today.

OFFENSE: RB SAMKON GADO, GREEN BAY PACKERS

- It was a very happy birthday for Green Bay Packers running back **SAMKON GADO**, who punctuated his 23rd birthday by playing a huge role in the Packers' 33-25 win against the Atlanta Falcons at the Georgia Dome. In his first career start, the rookie free agent rushed for 103 yards on 25 carries, scoring on touchdown runs of nine and two yards. Has also added four receptions, including a one-yard touchdown catch that gave Green Bay a 14-0 first quarter lead. Gado's three-touchdown performance was the first for a Packer rookie in more than a quarter of a century, since Pro Football Hall of Famer **JAMES LOFTON** equaled the feat on September 10, 1978 in a 28-17 win over the New Orleans Saints.

Signed by the Packers to the practice squad on October 17, the Nigeria native is the first Packers Offensive Player of the Week winner of 2005.

DEFENSE: S DARREN SHARPER, MINNESOTA VIKINGS

- Safety **DARREN SHARPER** enjoyed his most productive day as a Viking on Sunday, helping the team to its first road victory of the season, a 24-21 triumph over the New York Giants. Sharper, who joined the club as a free agent after spending his first eight seasons with the Green Bay Packers, tied a franchise record with three interceptions, twice stalling New York drives deep in Minnesota territory. With the game scoreless in the second quarter, Sharper returned an interception 92 yards for a touchdown, the longest return of a pick in team history. In the fourth quarter, the Richmond, VA native helped protect an eight-point lead, intercepting a pass at the Minnesota two-yard line. His first interception of the day came in the first quarter and led to a field goal attempt. The veteran defender added four tackles on the day with five passes defended.

In his ninth season from William & Mary, this is the two-time Pro Bowler's first Player of the Week honor.

SPECIAL TEAMS: CB NATHAN VASHER, CHICAGO BEARS

- On a day that included wind gusts of nearly 50 miles per hour, Chicago Bears cornerback **NATHAN VASHER** helped the home team to a 17-9 triumph over the San Francisco 49ers at Soldier Field. With the Bears trailing 3-0 in the waning seconds of the first half, Vasher returned a missed field goal 108 yards for a touchdown on the longest play in the 86-year history of the NFL. Vasher's return gave the Bears a 7-3 halftime advantage, sparking them to a win that improved the team to 6-3 and maintained their two-game advantage in the NFC North.

In his second season from Texas, this is Vasher's first Player of the Week award and the second consecutive Special Teams honor for the Bears (**ROBBIE GOULD**).

2005 NFC PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

	<u>Offense</u>	<u>Defense</u>	<u>Special Teams</u>
Wk 1	QB Drew Bledsoe, Dallas	DT Bryant Young, San Francisco	K John Carney, New Orleans
Wk 2	WR Santana Moss, Washington	LB Shelton Quarles, Tampa Bay	PR Bobby Wade, Chicago
Wk 3	RB Shaun Alexander, Seattle	DT Rod Coleman, Atlanta	P Josh Bidwell, Tampa Bay
Wk 4	WR Plaxico Burress, NY Giants	DE Darren Howard, New Orleans	K Neil Rackers, Arizona
Wk 5	QB Matt Hasselbeck, Seattle	CB Al Harris, Green Bay	PR R.W. McQuarters, Detroit
Wk 6	RB Shaun Alexander, Seattle	CB Anthony Henry, Dallas	P Josh Bidwell, Tampa Bay
Wk 7	QB Daunte Culpepper, Minnesota	LB Jeremiah Trotter, Philadelphia	K Josh Brown, Seattle
Wk 8	RB Tiki Barber, NY Giants	CB Charles Tillman, Chicago	K Joe Nedney, San Francisco
Wk 9	RB Shaun Alexander, Seattle	DE Mike Rucker, Carolina	K Robbie Gould, Chicago
Wk 10	RB Samkon Gado, Green Bay	S Darren Sharper, Minnesota	CB Nathan Vasher, Chicago

Other nominees for NFC Offensive Player of Week 10 were:

- Seattle running back **SHAUN ALEXANDER**, who rushed for 165 yards on 33 carries, scoring on touchdown runs of six, four and 17 yards in a 31-16 win over St. Louis. Alexander became the first player in NFL history to score 15 touchdowns in five consecutive seasons.
- Tampa Bay running back **MIKE ALSTOTT**, who rushed for touchdowns of two and one yard and added a game-winning two-point conversion, helping his team to a 36-35 win over visiting Washington.
- Arizona wide receiver **LARRY FITZGERALD**, who led all players in Week 9 with 141 receiving yards, adding an eight-yard touchdown catch among his nine receptions against Detroit.
- Tampa Bay wide receiver **JOEY GALLOWAY**, who totaled seven receptions for 131 yards, including a 24-yard touchdown catch.
- Detroit quarterback **JOEY HARRINGTON**, who completed 21 of 31 attempts for 231 yards, three touchdowns and no interceptions, posting a 121.8 passer rating in a 29-21 win over Arizona.
- Chicago running back **ADRIAN PETERSON**, who had his first career 100-yard rushing game, posting 120 yards on 24 carries and one touchdown.
- The **SEATTLE SEAHAWKS OFFENSIVE LINE**, who helped the team rush for 174 yards, did not allow a sack and was not penalized.
- Tampa Bay quarterback **CHRIS SIMMS**, who completed 15 of 29 attempts for 279 yards and a career-high three touchdowns, finishing with a 119.8 passer rating and no interceptions.
- Detroit wide receiver **ROY WILLIAMS**, who finished with seven receptions for 117 yards, including touchdown catches of seven, 21 and 29 yards.

Other nominees for NFC Defensive Player of Week 10 were:

- Green Bay linebacker **NICK BARNETT**, who recovered two fumbles, had 1.0 sack and seven tackles.
- Carolina cornerback **KEN LUCAS**, who recorded a career high-tying two interceptions and three tackles in a 30-3 win against the New York Jets.
- Tampa Bay defensive end **SIMEON RICE**, who posted 2.0 sacks, one interception and two forced fumbles.
- Dallas cornerback **ROY WILLIAMS**, who returned an interception 46 yards for a touchdown, helping his team to a 21-20 road win over Philadelphia. He also added four tackles and three passes defended.

Other nominees for NFC Special Teams Player of Week 10 were:

- San Francisco long snapper **BRIAN JENNINGS**, who forced one fumble and recovered one fumble on special teams, handling long snapping duties in fierce winds in Chicago.
- Green Bay kicker **RYAN LONGWELL**, who connected on four of four field goal attempts from 46, 23, 53 and 51 yards.
- Minnesota punt returner **MEWELDE MOORE**, who scored on a 71-yard punt return, helping the Vikings become the first team in NFL history to score on an interception, kickoff and punt return in the same game.
- Arizona kicker **NEIL RACKERS**, who tied **CARY BLANCHARD**'s NFL record with his 10th consecutive game with two-or-more field goals, connecting from 51 and 28 yards.
- Minnesota kickoff returner **KOREN ROBINSON**, who scored on an 86-yard kickoff return, his first career kickoff return touchdown.